

# RECONNAISSANCE LEVEL SURVEYS

## Standard Operating Procedures

UTAH STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
(Revised January 2007)

### A. INTRODUCTION

1. **Definition of Reconnaissance Survey.** Reconnaissance level survey is the most basic approach for systematically documenting and evaluating historic buildings in Utah. It is designed for dealing with large groups of buildings rather than for single sites. Most reconnaissance surveys include all or a large portion of the buildings in a community. The primary purpose is to provide a "first cut" of buildings in a given area that appear to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Reconnaissance survey involves only a visual evaluation of properties, not an assessment of associated historical events or individuals. That information can only be obtained through historical research conducted as part of an "intensive level survey," the next level of survey.
2. **Evaluation Criteria.** Properties identified as "eligible" in a reconnaissance survey must meet National Register age and integrity requirements (outlined in federal regulations 36 CFR 60 and National Register Bulletin 15). This means they should retain most of their original appearance and be at least 50 years old. In order to extend the "life" of the survey, however, it may be advisable to include buildings that will turn 50 in the next several years as eligible properties.
3. **Surveyor Requirements.** In order to ensure accuracy, it is necessary that surveys be conducted only by trained professionals. "Professionals" must meet the architectural historian qualifications outlined by the federal government in 36 CFR 61, Appendix A. These qualifications, in general, are a graduate degree in architectural history or a closely related field, or a bachelor's degree in the same fields plus at least two years of full-time experience in architectural history-related work. Non-professionals may assist with certain parts of the survey, but a professional must direct all aspects of the work. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) periodically holds training workshops.

### B. SURVEY PREPARATION

1. **Selection of the survey boundaries.** The dominant factors in selecting a survey area are budget, time, and the location of known historic resources. If a town is being surveyed the survey boundaries are usually set so that all areas which contain historic properties are included. Sections of exclusively out-of-period buildings are not included in the boundaries. Survey boundaries are usually determined by local officials in conjunction with State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff and the consultant. It is advisable to drive proposed survey areas in advance to confirm the boundaries.

Some cities may be too large to survey with one year's budget, so it is necessary to conduct the survey in phases. It may be appropriate in some cities to designate areas for both "standard" and "selective" surveys (see Section D). Areas with a concentration of historic buildings would receive "standard" survey coverage, while areas with a very low percentage of historic buildings would be surveyed on a "selective" basis. **All selective surveys need SHPO approval in advance.**

2. **Obtain a copy of the Utah Historic Sites database for the survey area from the SHPO.** Although many areas have not been previously surveyed, most populated areas in the state have been to some degree. The SHPO will provide to the consultant a copy of the MS Access database for the community or county (in the case of unincorporated areas), which can then be added to or updated. The consultant is responsible for inputting the data, which will then be submitted to the SHPO for uploading to the Utah Historic Sites database.
3. **Research Design.** A Research Design for the project must be written before the fieldwork is started. The Research Design outlines what is currently known about the survey area and identifies what types of resources are expected to be found. The Research Design consists of the following five sections:
  - a. A statement of the project objective. This is usually a simple statement such as "To identify the historic properties in the community that are potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places." One of the main purposes for this statement is to make clear to others who may read the report what the purpose of the survey was.
  - b. An explanation and justification of the boundaries of the survey area.
  - c. An outline history of the community derived from the available secondary sources. This should be in chronological order and include significant events, developments, and the principal means of livelihood in the community. To the extent possible, this information should be organized within "historic contexts," or chronological periods of development (e.g., Settlement 1852-1967, Growth of the Livestock Industry 1885-1910, Post-Railroad Industrial Growth 1875-1893, etc.).
  - d. A list and brief discussion of the types of buildings that are expected to be found in the survey area. This list will be based on the surveyor's knowledge of the survey area from "windshield" observations and from the research conducted as part of the Research Design. The list of expected resources should identify expected building types, materials, dates, and so forth. **To the extent possible the expected resources should be organized under the historic contexts identified in "c".**
  - e. A bibliography of the research sources pertaining to the community. All known sources of information and their location should be given; these will serve as a starting point for more detailed future documentation of the community. Repositories that should be checked include the local library, the State Historical Society library, college and university libraries, etc.

### **C. CONDUCTING THE STANDARD SURVEY**

This section pertains only to the "standard" survey, which involves recording every building within the survey area. See Section D for instructions on conducting a "selective" survey in areas with very low percentages of historic buildings. The standard survey process involves recording each site on the survey map, photographing each site, and recording each site on the survey form.

1. **General Instructions.** Surveys are conducted along streets in a systematic house-by-house fashion. Surveys should cover first one side of the street then the other, rather than mixing the two. Only in sparsely settled rural areas would a both-sides-at-once approach be appropriate. Surveys must be conducted in a logical manner,

beginning at one end of town and surveying in sequence to the other, or beginning at the middle point (Main or Center) and working out in each direction. For example, 100 South street could be surveyed from one end of town to the other, or, beginning at Main Street, surveyed to the East then to the West.

**2. Mapping.** This involves selecting a survey map and recording individual sites on it. It also includes marking the survey boundaries on a separate "overview" map (USGS quad map).

a. Selecting a Survey Map. Maps of most cities can be obtained from the city office or the County Recorder for a nominal fee. Maps drawn by the surveyor may also be used. Maps need not be drawn exactly to scale, though they should be approximately correct. In certain instances, such as in sparsely settled survey areas, a 7.5' USGS map may be used as the survey map. Survey maps must be sharp and "clean" enough that legible photocopies or blueprints can be made from them. Ink on mylar originals are preferred.

b. Recording Sites on the Map. This involves drawing a square for each building, indicating with a simple graphic each building's eligibility, and recording the address. Maps used in the fieldwork stage of the survey are never adequate for the final report, so the information must be transferred to a legible and properly labeled map before it is acceptable.

(1) Marking Sites. Each principal building should be identified by a square placed in the approximate location of the building along the street. Outbuildings are not drawn on the map unless they are substantial buildings and potentially eligible in their own right. Complexes containing several buildings, such as a house and an eligible barn and granary, should be circled to indicate their relationship to one another.

(2) Indicating Evaluations. All buildings evaluated as "eligible" (A or B rated) should be identified by shading in the site square. Squares of "ineligible" buildings should be left blank. We recommend cross-hatching "ineligible" buildings ("C" rated) to differentiate them from "out-of-period" ("D" rated) buildings. Color coding of sites is not acceptable since color cannot be easily duplicated.

(3) Recording Addresses. The address of each building must be recorded. If it is not visible on the house it should be extrapolated from surrounding addresses. "Estimated" addresses should be followed by a question mark (?) to indicate that they are not necessarily correct. In estimating addresses, care must be given to whether it should be an odd or even number. Site numbers should not be used except in very unusual situations (e.g., extremely remote sites) and only with SHPO approval.

c. Marking the USGS Map. The general survey boundaries must be drawn on a 7.5' USGS quad map. This makes the information consistent with the statewide inventory of historic and archaeological surveys. Photocopies of USGS maps are acceptable (and even preferred over originals) if the quad name and scale are given.

**3. Photographic Documentation.** Photographs are now accepted in two formats: standard black & white film, and digital images. If **standard film** is used, a 35mm black-and-white contact print and negative are required for every building evaluated; this includes outbuildings as well as principal buildings. Contact prints must be arranged in order on proof sheets no larger than 8 1/2" x 11" (larger sheets do not fit

in the files; no stapled appendages please). A sheet this size will accommodate 35 photographs--7 rows of 5 each.

Proof sheets must be labeled with the name and date of the survey and addresses for the individual sites. Estimated addresses should be indicated by a question mark in front of the building number. Eligible sites must be identified on the proof sheet by marking "A," "B," "C," or "D" in the corner of each photo. Negatives must also be labeled the same way. In fact, labeling the negative sleeves with a photographic marker will produce proof sheets that are already labeled. (The requirement for labeling negatives can be waived if the negative sheets are numbered to correspond with the fully labeled proof sheets. In this case, proof sheets must be labeled individually.)

**Color slides** of some or all eligible sites are encouraged for use in public and other presentations. Check with the city or agency having the survey conducted to see what their needs are.

For **digital photographs** a contact print mockup should be implemented when printing the photographs. The SHPO has a copy of an MS Word document developed by consultants that has a table set up for 12 photos and captions per page. You may request a copy of this from the SHPO. (It is recommended that you use an image file compressor when importing images into the contact document, otherwise the file size can get quite large and unmanageable.) These should be printed out on glossy, high-quality photo paper in black and white. A CD/DVD-ROM with all the images (in color) should be submitted along with the photo sheets. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. It is recommended that digital images be saved in 8-bit (or larger) color format, which provides maximum detail even when printed in black-and-white. TIF images are preferable, but JPEG images are acceptable. For more information on digital photo standards contact the SHPO.

4. **Recording Sites on the Form.** Sites must be recorded on the Reconnaissance Survey Form using the appropriate computer codes. **Refer to Appendix A for details.** Be sure to use a new form for each street; do not combine sites from different streets on one form. The information must be recorded in pencil. All lettering must be legible. Give special attention to crossing zeros (to distinguish them from the letter "O") and "Z"s (to distinguish them from 2's).

**Helpful hints:** Make a "master" form by filling in city/county codes, surveyor name, and survey date. Photocopy this master form and take copies into the field for recording at least the basic information (address, evaluation, construction date, height, outbuildings, and comments). It can be especially helpful to make notes on the form about materials or other features while in the field.

## **D. CONDUCTING THE SELECTIVE SURVEY**

Areas with very low percentages of older buildings may be surveyed on a selective basis. The selective survey, unlike the standard survey, does not require that every building in the area be recorded. Rather, it allows for recording only the buildings constructed during the "historic period." This includes both "eligible" and "ineligible" buildings from the historic period. **Permission from the SHPO is required in advance to conduct a selective reconnaissance survey.**

The guidelines and requirements for a selective survey are as follows.

1. **Determining Selective Survey Boundaries.** Selective surveys are usually conducted in conjunction with a standard survey or as a later phase of one. Standard surveys cover the core area of a community where there is a concentration of older buildings, while selective surveys usually cover fringe or outlying areas. Examples of areas that might be surveyed on a selective basis include relatively

new communities with very few older buildings, areas that were formerly on the fringes of towns but are now part of new subdivision developments, rural areas outside of a traditional town setting with only a few older buildings intermingled with new houses, mobile homes, etc.

Areas not eligible for selective survey are isolated sections in the historic core of a community, even if they no longer contain a concentration of older buildings. These must be surveyed at the standard level along with their neighboring buildings. "Islands" of selective survey areas within a standard survey area are not allowed.

2. **Preparing the Research Design.** The procedure is essentially the same as that for standard surveys (see Section B).
3. **Mapping.** Selective survey mapping differs from standard survey mapping in only two ways. First, only buildings constructed within the defined historic period are marked on the map; out-of-period buildings are not shown. All in-period buildings must be shown, even the ineligible ones that have lost their integrity. Just as in the standard survey, squares for eligible buildings are darkened in and squares for ineligible in-period buildings are left blank. Second, sections or blocks within the selective survey area must be labeled with the approximate date of their development.
4. **Photography.** The same photographic requirements apply, though, of course, only the buildings that are mapped are photographed.
5. **Recording the Sites on the Form.** Follow standard survey procedures. Be sure to use a new form for each street; do not combine sites from different streets on one form.

## **E. FINAL REPORT**

After the fieldwork has been completed, a Final Report must be written. This report summarizes the results of the survey. The Final Report is essentially an updated version of the Research Design. Items 1 - 4 are the same in the Final Report as in the Research Design. They must be included in the Final Report; merely stating "see research design" is **not** acceptable. The final report must contain the following information:

1. **A statement of the survey objectives.**
2. **Boundaries.** Explanation and justification of the boundaries of the survey area.
3. **A brief outline history** of the community derived from the available secondary resources.
4. **A bibliography** of the research sources used to compile the outline history.
5. **A "survey results" section.** This is essentially an updated version of the "expected resource" section that was prepared for the Research Design. This version outlines the types of properties that were actually identified in the survey. The types of properties (along with a few specific examples) should be organized under the historic contexts written in the Research Design. This will be a starting point for future National Register nominations. A complete listing of all eligible sites is not necessary; this can be generated by the computer at a later date.

6. **Recommendations.** This section will serve as a preservation plan for the community for the next few years, so considerable attention should be given to providing recommendations that are both professionally sound and practical. The consultant should receive input from the SHPO and the local historic preservation commission before completing this section. Recommendations should include activities from each of the three basic areas of preservation--survey, designation, and treatment (see "General Preservation Plan for Local Governments").

For example, recommendations might include priorities for intensive level survey, a suggestion to establish a local register or designate sites or districts to the National Register, and earmarking of any significant buildings that are in need of architectural analysis and rehabilitation or building materials that are common in the community and in need of attention (e.g. deteriorating soft-fired brick).

7. **An explanation of fieldwork techniques.** Since each survey area is different, minor variations from the standard procedures are often necessary. Any variations must be approved by the SHPO and must be thoroughly explained in written form in the final report.

**Instructions for Completing the  
RECONNAISSANCE LEVEL SURVEY FORM**  
Utah Historic Computer System (UHCS)  
(updated February 2000)

**Survey Form Headings: Street, City, County, Survey Date, Page Number**

A new sheet must be started whenever the street changes. Street names are recorded from left to right leaving a blank space between words. Numbered streets should be recorded with numbers rather than spelled out (e.g. 100 South instead of First South).

Examples:

4 0 0 S O U T H  
Street

J E F F E R S O N A V E  
Street

The city and county blanks should be filled in freehand, and the corresponding code boxes filled in using the appropriate codes obtained from the SHPO.

Example:

City Ogden 0 9 County Weber W E

The month and year of the survey must be recorded in the boxes provided. Note: the months are numbered not letter abbreviations.

Example: Survey Date 0 5 9 1 (May 1991)

Number each survey sheet as you proceed through the survey.

**Shot # (Photographs)**

To aid in labeling photographs, each roll of film should be numbered and indicated on the on the survey form. at the beginning of each roll. (Numbering the film canisters can also avoid confusion when getting the film processed.) The frame or shot number should be noted on the line provided. Some properties may require more than one photo and should be numbered as such.

**House No. (Address)**

House numbers should be justified to the right when entered. If the address is an estimation a question mark (?) should be recorded in the first box. The direction (from the center of town) should be recorded in the "Dir" box.

Examples:

1 1 2 6 S  
1126 S.

? 9 3 5 E  
approx. 935 E.

### **Eval. (Evaluation)**

Evaluations are based primarily on age (50+ years old) and integrity (see section A.2 of the Standard Operating Procedures). There are four choices:

- A - Eligible/Significant: built within the historic period and retains integrity; excellent example of a style or type; unaltered or only minor alterations or additions; individually eligible for National Register under criterion "C"; also, buildings of known historical significance (briefly explain in Comments section).
- B - Eligible: built within the historic period and retains integrity; good example of a style or type, but not as well-preserved or well-executed as "A" buildings; more substantial alterations or additions than "A" buildings, though overall integrity is retained; eligible for National Register as part of a potential historic district or primarily for historical, rather than architectural, reasons (which cannot be determined at this point).
- C - Ineligible: built during the historic period but has had major alterations or additions; no longer retains integrity.
- D - Out-of-period: constructed outside the historic period.

### **Constr. Date**

Enter the estimated year the building was constructed.

Example: 

1	8	9	0
---	---	---	---

  
building constructed in 1890

### **Ht. (Height)**

Enter the actual number of stories. For structures with half stories, enter 5 in the block to the right. Otherwise, leave that block blank.

Examples: 

	3
--	---

 3 stories      

	1	5
--	---	---

 1 1/2 story

### **Mat. #1 & #2 (Materials)**

Record up to two primary material types for the building from the attached list:

### **Style #1 & #2**

Record up to two architectural styles using the attached list:

[Note: See Utah's Historic Architecture (Carter and Goss, 1992) for more details]

### **Type (Plan)**

Record the primary building type from the attached list:

[Note: See Utah's Historic Architecture for more details on residential and commercial types]

### **Orig. Use (Original Use)**

Encode the original use of the property using the attached list:

[Note: See "National Register Bulletin 16A" pp. 18-23 for more details]



**#Non #Con (Number of Non-contributing outbuildings; Number of contributing outbuildings)**

Enter the number of non-contributing outbuildings associated with the site and the number of outbuildings that contribute to the significance of the site. Contributing outbuildings should date from the historic period and retain their integrity.

Examples:

2 non-contributing outbuildings

3 non-contributing outbuildings,  
1 contributing outbuilding

4 contributing outbuildings

**Comments**

The "Comments" field allows for additional relevant site information to be entered on the form, often to further explain an evaluation (up to 30 characters in length). Examples: "large rear addition" or "picture windows added" to explain a "C" rating; "converted into apts." or "currently law office" to clarify a building's use.

The property name, if you know it (such as Monroe City Hall, Dairy Freeze, Chevron, etc.), can be written freehand **below the encoding line rather than in the Comments section**. SHPO keypunchers will enter it into the Property Name field in UHCS. We have not included that field on this form because the name is rarely known at the recon. survey phase (since most surveyed buildings are residential), and it would significantly lengthen the form.

**COVER SHEET**  
*Reconnaissance Level Survey*

City Surveyed: \_\_\_\_\_ Complete \_\_\_\_\_ Partial

Survey Conducted For:

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Type of Survey: \_\_\_\_ Standard Recon. \_\_\_\_ Selective Recon. \_\_\_\_ Combination of Both  
\_\_\_\_ Update of Previous Survey (date \_\_\_\_\_ )

Number of Properties Surveyed: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Eligible Properties:

Estimated Acreage Surveyed:

Name of USGS Quad Map on Which Surveyed Area is Located:

---

*To Be Completed By SHPO Staff*

Evaluation: \_\_\_\_ Approved      \_\_\_\_ Conditionally Approved      \_\_\_\_ Returned for Corrections  
(see Comments)      (see Comments)

Evaluated By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

**Checklist of Required Items**

1. \_\_\_\_ Research Design Completed Prior to Survey
2. \_\_\_\_ Properly Marked Survey Map (original and 1 copy)
3. \_\_\_\_ Copy of USGS Map Showing Location of Surveyed Area
4. \_\_\_\_ Completed Survey Forms
5. \_\_\_\_ Properly Labeled Black-and-White Prints and Negatives or Digital Contact Sheets & CD-ROM
6. \_\_\_\_ Final Report, including outline of historic contexts and recommendations for future action
7. \_\_\_\_ Completed "Cover Sheet" Accompanying Final Report and Survey Materials
8. \_\_\_\_ Duplicates of everything (except negatives); the originals for the SHPO and one copy for the contracting community or agency.

Comments:

SURVEYOR \_\_\_\_\_